of care, and his central concept of atonement (chapter 6) as creative healing and community-making by itself justifies a close reading of The Problem. More broadly, Royce develops what may be regarded as a picture of the universe as universal peace process. For all its potential faults, this is in my opinion an idea worth taking seriously.

Royce wrote for the modern westerner, the "morally detached individual" (50) of the twentieth century. His question about the possibility of being a Christian, when generalized, is perhaps paradoxically the question of the possibility of humanism that animated much mid-century European discussion. What attitude of the will allows us to live most fully and meaningfully? Royce looked beyond the "will to live," which includes the Nietzschean "will to power" (351), looked beyond the "denial of the will to live," which encompasses all forms of nihilism (including Buddhist, existentialist, and deconstructionist flavors), and found beyond these the will to interpret, or the attitude of Loyalty (356). Our best hope, says Royce, lies in loyalty to one another. Needless to say, Roycean loyalty reaches far beyond mere fundamentalism, patriotism and nationalism: "all the higher forms of loyalty are, in their spirit, religious; for they rest upon the discovery, or upon the faith, that, in all the darkness of our earthly existence, we individual human beings, separate as our organisms seem in their physical weakness, and sundered as our souls appear by their narrowness, and by their diverse loves and fortunes, are not as much alone, and not as helpless, in our chaos of divided will, as we seem" (133-34). In The Problem Royce offers a hope that has been largely neglected, but that might yet be pursued in our already-stricken twenty-first century.

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Community as Healing, though short, provides a very useful "meta-analysis" of the current field of bioethics, how it has failed in its basic approach to the self and the practice of medicine, and offers a pragmatic approach, reorientation and solution to bioethics current and future
dilemmas. I rather enjoyed this book, perhaps the more so because (as Hester himself notes) it is rare to find a sustained theoretical argument founded in American pragmatism that is applied to the field of bioethics as a whole.

Hester begins with a brief, yet accurate, history of the development of bioethics. He notes that appeals to autonomy and the “principles” approach (otherwise known as the “Georgetown mantra”) to ethics in medicine have dominated the playing field since the 1970’s, especially among health care clinicians. To further his project of injecting American pragmatism into the field of bioethics, Hester offers an extended critique of the work of Tom Beauchamp and James Childress (as found in the first four editions of the Principles of Biomedical Ethics), and H. Tristram Engelhardt (as found in the Foundations of Bioethics). Hester argues that these works, focused as they are on abstract ethical principles and the autonomy of the individual, fail to provide a meaningful account of either ethical decision making in practice or of the “self.” Autonomy, as it is presented by Beauchamp, Childress, and Engelhardt, views the individual as something that exists distinct from and prior to culture and community—in other words, these works of bioethics champion the individualism of the Enlightenment. For Hester, this is where they go wrong—an incorrect concept of selfhood can only lead to incorrect (or perhaps “insufficient” is more accurate) theories and values in ethical decision making.

In opposition to this dominant viewpoint, Hester promotes a pragmatic approach to bioethics through an examination of habit, intelligent action, inquiry, “moral artistry,” narrative, and the self. Drawing on classical pragmatism (most specifically, from William James, John Dewey, and George Herbert Mead), Hester establishes that human relations and interactions are crucial elements not only for a community, but also for the creation of the self. It is shared experiences, and shared narratives, that create the self and community in interaction with each other. For either to develop or have meaning, shared experiences are a necessity. Thus, the isolated and monadic view of the individual promoted in the Enlightenment incorrectly characterizes the self and its experiences. In its place, Hester presents a functional concept of the self (drawing largely on Mead), the self as
socially-situated and created, both “developed by and developing of community itself” (pg 48). This pragmatic concept of the self is used to re-conceive the physician-patient encounter and relationship, as well as its end goal—“living healthily” by promoting a process/community of shared meaning and action for all individuals involved in medical encounters. As Hester notes, “Through the inclusion of individual desires and a striving for mutual satisfaction of multiple desires, medical encounters become vehicles for communal participation by both health care professionals and patients engaged in the mutual attainment of common ends in and through living healthily” (pg. 80). Rather than a simple promotion of autonomy to make space for individual choices (which Hester believes is of limited use, and has little positive function other than the often pro forma role of informed consent), Hester’s position requires the promotion of active patient agency, the ability to act meaningfully, by participating in the “community as healing.”

My only critique would have to be the lack of practical recommendations to enable the “community as healing.” While it is true that each medical encounter and relationship is different, and it is in the working specifics, the narrative of the actors, that the real work is to be done, I wish Hester had more concrete suggestions for the current health care professional than a change in orientation in approaching the medical encounter. He does state that the most important place to begin this work is in medical school, by training future physicians to value and work with the “human condition” and not just with the natural sciences. I would agree, yet still wish for more. Hester concludes, in part, that, “[t]his book itself will not be complete until it can bear fruit beyond its own arguments and examples” (pg 84). Perhaps the “more” I am looking for is the challenge of the book to all of its readers.

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